

**Case Studies in  
Union Leadership Training  
1951-52**

**Bulletin No. 1114**

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

**Maurice J. Tobin, *Secretary***

**BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS**

**Ewan Clague, *Commissioner***



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## Letter of Transmittal

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,  
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS,  
*Washington, D. C., August 1, 1952.*

THE SECRETARY OF LABOR:

I have the honor to transmit herewith five case studies in union leadership training, 1951-52. These five articles appeared originally in the Monthly Labor Review of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

To understand the directions toward which organized labor is moving, it is of value to survey the educational programs which the unions are sponsoring. In planning this series of articles, a few cases were selected which pointed to significant advances in the methodology and emphasis of workers education. The particular unions studied (and the list could be extended) were found to be conscientiously attempting to train the members of their own organizations—and in one case those nonmembers who wished to cast their lot with the organized labor movement and who were accepted by the union concerned—in order to prepare them for positions of leadership in the labor movement of the future.

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EWAN CLAGUE, *Commissioner.*

Hon. MAURICE J. TOBIN,  
*Secretary of Labor.*





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# Case Studies in Union Leadership Training, 1951-52

## ILGWU Approach to Leadership Training

Labor's newest full-fledged "college"—the Training Institute of the AFL International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union—graduated its initial class in May 1951 and placed its graduates in jobs with the union. In 12 months' intensive training, the Institute had successfully surmounted the major difficulties predicted by those who felt that union leadership could be developed only through years of rank-and-file experience. With the cooperation of Institute Director Arthur A. Elder and Assistant Director E. T. Kehrer, the writer made an intensive study of the school and its work in June 1951 and observed the early phases of its second year of operation.

The class and field work methods devised by the ILGWU for the Institute could readily be applied by other unions. However, the length of time for which such a project would be useful to any individual union would depend on the size of the organization, age of its leadership, turn-over of the labor force, labor relations in the industry, and other such variables. Because of these limiting factors, the conclusion is inevitable that a full-scale labor college could endure for an indefinite period only if supported by several unions acting jointly or by the labor movement as a whole.

### Role of the Institute

ILGWU interest in a labor college dates back to its 1937 convention, when such an institution was urged for the labor movement as a whole. ILGWU president David Dubinsky, then and subsequently, pointed out the aging leadership of many of the major United States labor organizations, the failure to develop younger replacements, the increasing need for leaders who were skilled technicians capable of handling the increasingly complicated functions of the modern trade-union. Trade-union disunity ruled out any such general

labor college, however; and at the 1947 convention an ILGWU training institute was authorized.

The Institute represents the first union effort to train young people, with or without union experience, for specific staff jobs.<sup>1</sup> Most large unions provide some training for members already elected to union office, as well as for new membership. For a number of years the ILGWU itself has maintained an Officers' Qualification Course, and only a member who had a year's experience as a paid union officer before the course was set up or had completed the course (if it was available) was to be eligible for paid union office. In practice, this requirement operated only in New York and few officers had either taken the course or received ILGWU scholarships to the special labor courses at such institutions as Harvard University. Neither the ILGWU nor any other union had previously made such a heavy financial commitment to leadership training,<sup>2</sup> had required prospective officers to forego employment for so long, had set up such careful selection standards, or had guaranteed jobs on graduation.

Although the first year's operation convinced Institute officials of the practicability of the training, the permanency of the Institute in its present form is not assured. ILGWU needs for organizers, though larger than those of trade-unions in industries with a lower worker and establishment turn-over, are not unlimited. In supporting the project at the 1947 convention, President Dubinsky called upon the ILGWU to "sponsor an educational project and attract to it other sections of the labor movement \* \* \* for the purpose of training leadership for our union and for the trade-union movement in general." Queried in 1951 on whether the Institute could train trade-unionists from other industries, Institute officials thought it possible, through supplying such students with basic

<sup>1</sup> ILGWU locals have three types of full-time paid staff members—local managers, business agents, and organizers—as well as the elective offices of president, vice president, etc.

<sup>2</sup> The initial annual budget voted for the project was \$100,000; the first year's operation cost an average \$4,000 per student, though the total was expected to be smaller in subsequent years.



classroom courses and assigning them to unions in their own industry for field work. But this could better be handled by a separate Institute operated by the AFL or, in the event of labor unity, by the trade-union movement as a whole.

Meantime, Institute officials have undertaken a number of supplementary projects to utilize the facilities built up and the experience gained in the ILGWU program. One such is the use of Institute faculty and equipment for brief refresher courses for officers, held concurrently with the regular Institute classes; the first of these, on an experimental basis, was a 2-week course in July for 16 ILGWU staff members from 6 departments in various parts of the United States and Canada. Another is a new union song book, worked up by one of the students and utilizing current tunes and words of particular significance to the present-day labor force as well as some of the better-known traditional labor songs. On the basis of Institute experience in both class and field work, a new organizer's handbook is also being prepared to include techniques found effective for the problems of a well-established labor movement.

### Selection of Students

As minimum standards, applicants for leadership training at the Institute must have completed high school or its equivalent, be between 21 and 35 years old,<sup>3</sup> and provide doctors' certificates of health. Consideration is also given, both in the application form and in personal interviews, to the applicant's union connections, his previous activities and interests, and his reasons for wanting to attend the Institute. No limitations are placed on home locality, marital status, sex, religion, or race. In keeping with the ILGWU leaders' belief that potential leadership is to be found in other industries and unions, and that many persons have never had the opportunity to serve the labor movement to the extent of their desire and ability, candidates need not have experience in the garment industry, although preference is given to those who have.

Candidates are interviewed exhaustively by a three-man Admissions Committee and the Committee on Education to determine two fundamental qualifications—leadership ability and “sticking

power” or dedication to the trade-union movement. To this end, the negative aspects of union work are emphasized, as well as any personal handicaps the individual may have which would require extra effort on his part. Negro applicants are warned that, while they will be placed where their race will hamper their effectiveness as little as possible, they will inevitably have to resolve some difficult situations. A young German-born applicant for the second-year class was told he would have to get rid of his accent; even with the Institute's help, he would have to work hard.

The individual's political and social beliefs are also checked into in this connection and considerable weight is put on ambition. As stated by the Institute's Assistant Director:<sup>4</sup> “The applicant had to have a mature, aggressive, out-going personality, with a rather well-developed desire to live a life of service. Progressive political ideas, familiarity with the objectives of the labor movement, a receptiveness to learning, were considered . . .”

Another factor carefully scrutinized is the applicant's family status. Union employment often entails considerable travel, irregular hours, and frequent evening and Sunday work. The student's wife (or parents) must be aware of this and in sympathy with the objectives of his work. Women applicants must recognize that permanent staff employment practically precludes a normal family life for them, according to staff officials.

The applicant must also be willing to work outside New York City. Due to the long-time concentration and high degree of organization of the women's garment industry in New York City, current ILGWU staff needs are chiefly outside that city (particularly in the organizing “frontiers” of the South, Southwest, and West). Yet the majority of applicants, and those most familiar with the ILGWU and its objectives, have to date come from New York. Students sign no contracts, but agree that employment will be offered “in such place and capacity” as the ILGWU determines.

Finally a prospective student must be able to finance a year's maintenance. The course was set at 1 year in consideration of the organization's needs, on the one hand, and the length of time a student could be expected to be willing and able to interrupt his employment, on the other. No tuition is charged but neither is any remuneration provided

<sup>3</sup> The maximum age was raised from 30 to 35 years after the first year.

<sup>4</sup> E. T. Kehr, *Training for Union Leadership*, The Standard, The American Ethical Union, New York, May 1951.

students (except to meet field expenses), thus eliminating all but those sufficiently serious about the project to provide their own maintenance. For New Yorkers, who frequently can live at home without expense, this is less of a problem. Limited opportunity to earn small sums is given by the Institute in various forms, such as paying students to work up classroom notes for mimeographing. Thus far some students have been eligible for veterans' education rights. Others have relied on savings or, in some cases, support by their wives. Part-time work outside the Institute is discouraged, although necessary in some instances. The current emphasis on drawing students from outside New York would increase this consideration.

Advance publicity given the establishment of the Institute resulted in roughly a thousand requests for application blanks the first year, and close to 300 persons were interviewed. Estimates of the number of staff openings available in any 1 year, plus the importance of individual attention, limited the size of the class, and in the first year 35 students were finally admitted.<sup>5</sup> More emphasis was placed the second year on obtaining applicants through ILGWU locals, which were urged to encourage promising young persons to apply. The second class started with 27 students.

In both classes the majority of students had substantially more than the minimum educational requirement, each group including a few who had done graduate work. Four-fifths of the first class were from the State of New York while nearly half of the second class came from outside that State; in each class, however, only two students came from States outside the New England and Middle Atlantic areas.

The ethnic composition of the New York industry's labor force was reflected in the large number of Jewish students participating, as well as several having Italian background. Only four women were included in the first class and three in the second, in spite of the preponderance of women in garment employment; far fewer women had applied, but those who did usually had above-average qualifications. Over half the students in each class were less than 25 years old.

In spite of the preference given applicants from the industry, only about a third of the students in

the first class had garment experience—all of these being ILGWU members except one who had previously belonged to the CIO Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. A number of additional students had other union affiliations but roughly a third had had no previous connection with the labor movement. A stronger emphasis on obtaining persons from the garment industry, agreed to at the General Executive Board meeting in February 1951, plus the greater reliance on recruitment through ILGWU locals were reflected in the make-up of the second class. Of the 27 students, 14 had industry and ILGWU experience, 9 had some other union affiliation or former affiliation (including several from the CIO), and only 4 had no union affiliation whatsoever.

Students accepted in both classes reflected the emphasis placed on ambition, both in their evident interest in advancing in the ILGWU and in their definite ideas of what union programs should include. Students evinced much interest at the beginning of each class in working eventually into the Education Department. However, through their field experience, the first-year students gradually became absorbed in the local operations which were to be their work. Many realized that the opportunities for carrying out union programs, including education, were greatest in local staff work.

### Class and Field Work

Flexibility and practicality are outstanding characteristics of both the formulation of the leadership training program and the methods which the students are taught. All aspects of the training are directed toward preparing the individual for the particular job he is to do—that of an organizer initially, but with the possibility of working into other union jobs. To this end the approach of both faculty and staff is personalized, with considerable individual counseling, even on seemingly small points. Students from New York, for example, are helped in the speech workshop to get rid of any local accent they may have, and are advised that the stylized clothing popular in some parts of the city might prove a handicap in the field.

Alternating class and field work periods are provided—3 of the former, 2 of the latter. Field work is the most profitable part of the training, both students and staff agree. It serves a dual function: (1) Early job experience matures the students;

<sup>5</sup> Final number graduated was 30. One student was dropped after 5 months on grounds he was unable to handle the work; another dropped out for personal reasons; five were drafted before the year was out, though two were so near completion of the course that they were formally graduated.



gives them a more realistic approach and a more directed interest in class material than they would otherwise have; demonstrates any personality problems they may have to overcome; and shows in operation the techniques found effective by union officers after years of trial and error; (2) close relations with the field officers familiarize the Institute staff members with the needs of the locals, show them the "curriculum in action," enable them to adjust the training accordingly, and clarify for local personnel the Institute's function.

*Class Work.* Classroom work at ILGWU headquarters in New York runs from 9 a. m. to 4 p. m., Monday through Friday. It is divided between lectures, attended by the whole student body, and workshops for which the class is broken up into three groups that meet concurrently and study the various workshop subjects in rotation.

Lectures cover general subjects and specific union and industry questions, including economics for workers; labor legislation and history; dynamics of the American community; international labor problems; comparative economic systems; the American corporation; management engineering; history, structure, and operation of the ILGWU; history, economics, and business practices of the garment industry, and garment construction; and problems of organization, union administration, collective bargaining and agreements, and political action techniques. Workshops provide instruction in speech; leaflet writing; public relations; audio-visual techniques; radio script-writing and broadcasting; mimeographing; and typing.

Instructors are drawn largely from academic and other professional circles in and around New York and from the ILGWU staff. To avoid some difficulties encountered in the first year, every effort is made to engage instructors who are practicing their profession as well as teaching its rudiments. Guest lecturers, including Government and local ILGWU officials, are worked in frequently. Both classrooms and workshops are informal. Students are vocal about experiences and opinions, even if at variance with the instructors.

In working out its leadership training program, the Institute staff stressed not only selection of appropriate subjects but treatment of the information in a manner calculated to prepare the students for their work. The economics course,

for example, is not the standard academic beginning course but is "economics for workers," and is taught with a sociological approach. When the Supreme Court decision, upholding the terms of the Smith Act governing conspiracy against the United States, was handed down early in the Institute's second year, the labor law instructor interrupted his course to discuss the various Court opinions, as of particular interest to the students.

Lectures are integrated by the staff (one member of which sits in briefly on each lecture period) and through faculty meetings which were instituted in the second year. Thus, when the instructor in dynamics of the American community points out which groups usually lead in the community, the instructor in "how to organize" takes the opportunity to explain methods for reaching those leaders.

The difficulties of giving the students an intimate understanding of the various garment processes and trades—sufficient both to "speak the same language" as garment workers and to represent them skillfully—were repeatedly advanced against the labor-college type of leadership training. Proponents of the project were themselves skeptical of success in this regard. The problem is particularly important for unions in the garment industry. Because of the seasonal nature of the work as well as recurring fluctuation with style, garment workers generally are employed on "piece prices," which must yield the average hourly minimum rate set by collective agreement. A major portion of the ILGWU business agent's time is spent adjusting and checking the piece prices with changes in style or material used. He must be able to determine, for example, whether a worker complaint that she "can't make out" (i. e., earn the minimum hourly rate) is caused by an employer attempt to get more time-consuming work done without a commensurate rate increase or by a worker slow-down to obtain higher rates and thus raise earnings, as sometimes happens.

Suggestions by ILGWU officers and students alike that each student be placed temporarily in a shop were rejected when it became apparent that in a brief assignment he could not obtain rounded experience. Even a student with industry experience generally knew little about operations other than his own. The "trade" training evolved proved surprisingly successful, including:

- (1) A detailed description, in the economics

of the garment industry course, of every part of a garment shop and its operations.

(2) An evening course in garment construction. Here, an experienced operator demonstrated and explained the different operations of garment construction in detail, showing the students the effect on speed of different styles and materials, at what stage the operator must remove a piece, often to the other end of the shop, for pressing before continuing the operation, etc.

(3) A 1-week course in machines, which are most efficient, what type is in use in a particular shop and its effect on the worker. Each graduate received a list of these machines for use in discussions with management on shop efficiency.

(4) A sewing class for students without garment-shop experience. Under the supervision of an experienced student, they used sewing machines 2 hours on school nights for 2 weeks.

Another problem encountered in planning the classroom curriculum was the need to meet the requirements of both the students with industry experience, who wanted more general education, and those without such experience, who wanted industry and union information. The tailoring of the program to the specific job to be performed has contributed to solving this problem: college graduates discover that the economics course is substantially different from any they have had; and industry students receive information on unfamiliar aspects of the trade and see their own jobs described in relation to the industry as a whole. Interest is also maintained through continually drawing on the students themselves for their own ideas and experiences. The student who spoke for the first class at graduation concluded that it was impossible to satisfy fully all the varied needs, but that the Institute had gone a long way in that direction. The evaluation of the Institute staff was that no difference existed in the caliber of the organizer, between those with and without industry experience.

Through the workshops, theory is converted into practice in the classwork periods as well as in the field. During the first year, students practiced their speech instruction from soap boxes in Union Square. During the second year, the student political committee was assigned briefly to get signatures for the election petition of an ILGWU-supported candidate.

Homework assignments for the workshops

likewise consist of drafting leaflets, preparing radio programs, etc. In the leaflet lay-out workshop, for example, each student is hypothetically assigned to help organize a garment shop which the ILGWU has previously attempted to organize. Given a series of descriptions of campaign developments, the student drafts a leaflet appropriate to each new development. Workshop discussions of these leaflets point up the varied problems likely to confront an organizer, ranging from whether AFL affiliates cooperate with CIO unions in antiunion towns to whether it is practical to cite the protective provisions of the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act when the AFL favors repeal.

In the workshops stress is laid on learning the mechanics of equipment in order to prevent losses of equipment which frequently occur through improper use or neglect. Before instruction is given in the use of movies, for example, the students must learn to operate the equipment and service it. They may be called on, without warning, to run a movie for the class, having to handle breaks purposely put into the film. The students are cautioned that they are working under ideal conditions at the Institute where any equipment needed is promptly obtained; and that they must be prepared frequently to improvise.

The efficacy of the curriculum is checked and rechecked by the Institute staff. Occasional written tests are used primarily to find out whether essential information is being put across to the students successfully. Regional and local officers are urged to make suggestions. The lecture series on time studies—a subject of considerable concern to the ILGWU at the present time—was included in response to field requests. The Institute staff feared that this course might lead the graduates to regard themselves as management engineers and to try to do work they were not properly equipped to perform, but to date, this fear has proved unjustified and the course has been retained. Students are also encouraged to make suggestions. Additions to the Institute library have been made on the basis of student suggestions. In another instance, a recommendation (by a graduate who was trying to stop trucks servicing a struck shop) to include information on State trucking laws was vetoed by the ILGWU legal department as requiring too much time; information on a particular law could quickly be obtained locally, when needed.

Curriculum adjustments in response to students' field experience include shifting the dynamics of the American community course from the second to the first semester. Difficulties encountered by first-year students in their first field-work period, attributed by the staff to lack of understanding of community forces (particularly in the small town), diminished after the dynamics course.

*Field Work.* An attempt is made to expose the students to the widest possible variety of situations in their two periods in the field. Insofar as is feasible, students are assigned to large, well-organized locals, usually in large cities, for one period, and to small locals, usually in small towns in "frontier" areas, for the other. Regional directors, who are responsible for the students in the field (under the general supervision of the Institute staff), are requested to fit them into the day-to-day operations of the locals as much as possible, while at the same time exposing them to the maximum number of different operating functions. Ideally, each student would be assigned to a separate local, to avoid their clanning together and to force them to work into the community; to date, however, this has not always been possible and as many as six students were assigned to one local during the first year.

By and large, this system of field practice has worked out well, according to the Institute staff, who receive weekly reports from the students on each day's activities and who visit the various regions throughout the field periods to discuss problems with the students and their progress with the regional staff. Only in two or three instances have students been transferred because of personality conflicts or lack of opportunity for adequate experience.

In the more highly organized centers, such as Chicago or New York, where the union's service functions (e. g., resolving grievances) make up the bulk of union operations, the student gets a good sample of business agent work. He observes an agent in all his activities and is given occasional opportunities to speak at local meetings, do office work, and so on. The experience obtained by the student in this situation is extremely broad: he visits shops to receive complaints; observes piece-price settlements; participates in picket lines; sits in on contract committee, executive, local, and mass meetings;

checks on overdue vacation payments or unemployment insurance rights; observes NLRB hearings; attends plant conferences on engineering problems; helps put on union shows.

In contrast, in the less organized areas the student often acts as a full-time organizer, with supervision frequently limited to occasional "strategy" conferences. Such assignments furnish a narrower but more concentrated experience. While he sees little of service operations, he participates in all phases of an organizing campaign. He drafts, mimeographs, and distributes leaflets; works out means of obtaining information on managerial activities in the shop and names of workers to contact; drives for long hours on bad roads to locate workers and sign them up; and may even be the target of eggs and bags of water tossed out plant windows by anti-union workers. One group of students was arrested during the first year for obstructing an entry way; they obtained a dismissal of the case by measuring the sidewalk at the entrance and demonstrating that side by side the students were not broad enough to achieve such a block.

Reluctance, in a number of instances, of both students and staff to have the students return to class demonstrates the degree to which students are integrated into local operations in this latter type of field situation. In one case, two students, who were the mainstays of a picket line, were permitted to stay an extra week to enable two full-time staff organizers to acquaint themselves with the situation and take over the work.

### Placement of Graduates

The general allocation of graduates to various regions is determined by the over-all needs of the organization, as seen by top ILGWU officials, and by the requests sent in by regional directors based on personal observation and brief descriptions sent out on each student toward the close of the school year. Individual assignments are then made by the Institute staff, giving as much weight as possible to student and regional director preferences, but also considering the organization's needs in a particular region, the abilities of the students, and the personalities involved.

A number of snags were encountered in placing the first group of graduates:

(1) Regional officers made commitments to particular students that they would be hired in



their regions, and to local unions that they would be allocated a certain number of students, and even in some instances, specific students. All personnel have now been notified that no job commitments of any kind are to be made in the field.

(2) Regional directors requested more students than could be allocated and, in some instances, particular students by name. It was clear that the Institute's inability to meet all the requests would create considerable disappointment. Some of the students with the broadest experience and ability were requested for several regions.

(3) Students expressed predilections for or objections to particular areas. In spite of the students' initial commitment to accept any assignment, considerable discussion was needed to persuade some to take positions in the more remote or otherwise less desirable spots, especially since first-year students had been permitted to indicate preferences (both for field and final assignment). In future, students are to be given a choice of two or three locations previously determined as appropriate. Success in attracting students from more varied areas would minimize this problem, since the students would, in general, be most effectively placed in an area similar to their home locale.

Within a month after completion of the first course, all the graduates had been hired and were at work, largely as organizers and in some cases as business agents. Scattered reports received by the Institute during that period indicate that the new staff members were engaging in a wide variety of operations and were, with some exceptions, already closely integrated in their new work. Within the first month of employment, one reported negotiation of a piece-price increase; another, sufficient organization for a shop election. Others helped in organization campaigns which failed. Still others worked on service operations.

## CIO Training for Active and Effective Local Leadership

Stimulation of thought and interest is the major means utilized by the CIO in its training program of nationally sponsored schools to increase the activity and effectiveness of local union officers. To this end, classes are small, the approach is informal, and group discussion of current

Critics of the project doubted whether regional and local personnel would accept the students as staff members, predicting local fears and resentment of persons given responsible jobs without coming up through the ranks. However, the regional directors have demonstrated their support of the project by their enthusiastic requests for graduates. Personnel at the local level have cooperated also, but problems still exist in this regard.

Students of the first class reported some instances of resentment by local staff members in their field-work periods. But this came, they said, largely from persons already insecure, who were not doing the best possible jobs and who therefore feared replacement. The opinion was expressed by these students, however, that acceptance at the local level might have been at least partially due to the Institute's support by top ILGWU officers.

The experience of the students has carried over to the graduates. On the whole they have been accepted, although individual experience varies. One graduate was introduced to the owners' association representative (with whom he was to negotiate) as "a student from our Institute." At the other extreme, another has already run a shop meeting. One who regretted leaving New York comments that he is glad he did; he has a status and a sense of important responsibility he feels he would not have in the larger city.

Difficulty at the local level has not been as great as the Institute had anticipated. Both the staff and the graduates recognize, however, that the question of local acceptance, as well as the final demonstration of the value of training, can only be settled by time and the effectiveness of the individual's work. Time alone can also determine whether the graduates stay with the union long enough to make the cost of the training a worthwhile ILGWU investment.

issues affecting labor regardless of industry or locale is emphasized. The effect of the training, though not susceptible to measurement, inevitably varies with the different personalities and previous experience of the students. Not the least of the results are the personal contacts, the increased understanding between groups, and the greater feeling of unity in the organization, which are produced by a week of living and talking together.

Over and above the gains to the students them-

selves, the schools provide a means for facilitating the work of the organization in other ways. National personnel working mainly in the field meet local officers with whom they may later work. Information on the effectiveness of national headquarters' activities is provided by class discussions and by student reading reports which include questions calculated to reflect the degree of clarity and adequacy of the pamphlet read. To date, full utilization of such information has been prevented by the broad scope of the program and staff limitations. But, for those national and regional officers directly participating, the program affords an opportunity to get a feeling for the problems and immediate needs of the local membership.

In order to observe the program at first hand, the writer attended one of the sessions in September 1951. This was the Eastern Leadership Training School at Bynden Wood Camp, YMCA installation near Reading, Pa. George Guernsey, CIO Associate Director in Charge of Education, and Ben Segal, CIO Associate Director of Education, in discussions on the over-all program, described the Pennsylvania school as fairly representative.

### Program Content

Basically the national leadership training program supplements the training given by individual CIO international unions and regional industrial union councils (IUC)—both area-wise and in subject coverage. Several member organizations have operated summer leadership training institutes for a number of years, some of them as early as the mid-1930's. Since World War II, such schools have grown substantially, both in size and in number. In the summer of 1951, some 40 such schools were held, attended by an estimated 4,500 CIO members. The national Department of Research and Education assists and coordinates the development of these training programs by supplying literature and visual aids and holding regional and national meetings of educational directors.<sup>6</sup>

The department in 1947<sup>7</sup> initiated a series of

<sup>6</sup> Based on the manuals used in the schools and revised annually, a general manual of facts, policies, and educational techniques has been developed for the use of the public as well as educational and other CIO officers.

<sup>7</sup> The preceding year, the department started regional week-end conferences for CIO members. As the program of 1-week leadership training schools has expanded, less reliance has been placed on these more limited conferences.

summer schools for areas where member organizations had not run institutes of their own. These are sponsored and administered by the national staff in cooperation with CIO regional directors and State councils in the area concerned. Of the 56 such schools held to date, 9 were conducted in 1951. The program was also being placed on a year-round basis. A few areas have had schools annually, but, in general, the location and State coverage have varied.<sup>8</sup>

As currently operated, the schools start with a preliminary session on Sunday evening, daily classes run Monday through Friday, and certificates are presented on Friday evening. Three successive classes are held in the morning for all of the students, who are divided into two groups and rotated to facilitate individual participation. Half of the afternoon is devoted to three concurrent workshops, each student selecting one which he attends throughout the week. An evening lecture, a panel discussion, or a showing of movies is attended by the entire group. Members of the national Department of Research and Education do most of the class-work teaching and conduct some of the workshops. Instruction is given in particular fields by personnel from other national CIO departments, officials of CIO organizations in the region concerned, and specialists from outside the labor movement. "Homework" is limited to three "reading reports" on pamphlets and leaflets distributed. As a follow-up, all student-delegates are put on the Department's mailing list to receive periodically information on current issues, pamphlets, and some program suggestions.

In recognition of the wide variation in individual development, the division for class sessions at some of the schools is roughly according to the students' previous experience—the curriculum remaining the same for all, but the teaching being adjusted to the particular group. At the 1951 Pennsylvania school this was done only in the political action workshop; beginners learned the details of techniques and an advanced group studied the broader problems and implications of political action. This procedure was evolved after an experimental advanced school, held in conjunction with the 1950 Missouri school, proved unsatisfactory. At that

<sup>8</sup> The 1951 schools were held in the following nine regions: Southern States; Maryland and Virginia; Iowa and Nebraska; Missouri; Indiana; California; the Rocky Mountain area; Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and West Virginia; and Oklahoma, Kansas, and Arkansas.



school, any officer who had previously attended a CIO school—whether sponsored nationally or by a member organization—was eligible for the advanced course; because of the method of selection, however, the “advanced” group still varied widely in individual development, for some students had had no training since the early 1930’s, while others had attended the 1949 summer school.

Schools are held at centers which have facilities for housing, meals, and recreation. Baseball or other organized sports are available during the afternoon free periods. The student council, elected early in the course, arranges entertainment to follow the evening sessions. Many of the sessions are opened by union songs, played on records or sung by the group. Posters and bulletins provide atmosphere, supplementary material, and a demonstration of educational techniques.

The schools cover leadership techniques and national issues of relevance to all CIO members, regardless of locality or industry. They do not, for instance, take up collective-bargaining questions, such as whether an escalator clause is desirable in a contract. Accordingly, the general topics may be the same each year, but the material presented and the emphasis vary, reflecting the changing national and international scene.

Major topics at the 1951 Pennsylvania school were labor history, economics, international affairs, civil rights, and certain political problems (with workshops in public speaking and parliamentary procedure, educational techniques and community relations, and political action techniques). But the economics course, for example, covering “Problems of a Mobilization Economy,” was completely different from that in the summer of 1950. International affairs and political action emerged as main points of emphasis, owing to repeated treatment in the curriculum itself and through the “extra-curricular” activities which in many ways augmented the formal training: treatment of international problems in a regular morning class was supplemented by an evening panel discussion, a United Nations movie, and arrangements for summer school students to buy books for German and Austrian trade-unionists. In addition, the students gained appreciation and understanding from close and personal association, in informal social gatherings, with a Danish workers’ education specialist who stayed the

entire week, an Indonesian speaker who spent the evening at the camp, and an ECA-sponsored French labor-management team attending the opening sessions.

### The Student Body

All locals and councils in the region concerned are invited to send representatives,<sup>9</sup> provided that no individual attends twice. The national office’s only guide to selection consists of urging organizations to choose individuals who are most likely to benefit from and to utilize effectively the training given.

Attendance averages about 30, although individual schools vary considerably. The proportion of women delegates is usually low. Participation by minority groups—Negroes, or, in some locales, workers of Mexican descent—is also small; some schools have had no Negro participants although in one instance half the student group was colored. Every effort is directed toward making the schools interracial, but many of the unions sending delegates are in industries which employ few Negroes.

Variation in number and type of representatives sent to the schools is demonstrated by the 1951 Pennsylvania school. Of the 36 students,<sup>10</sup> the 10-man steel-worker delegation was the largest single industry group, and with the chemical, textile, and paper-worker delegates constituted over two-thirds of the student body. Packing-house, automobile, printing, electrical, communications, and brewery workers’ unions sent the remaining students. Twenty-four came from Pennsylvania, many from either Reading or Philadelphia. (Six of the steel workers were from Reading for example, and all five textile workers came from Philadelphia.) Eight were from New Jersey and two each from Delaware and West Virginia.

Over two-thirds of the students were sent by their local unions; the others represented city, county, or district IUC. Fifteen had been elected at local meetings, and the others were chosen by the unions’ executive boards or other administra-

<sup>9</sup> The \$45 fee for tuition, board, and room is paid by the organization sending the delegate, who also receives pay (at his regular hourly rate) for time lost from the job, traveling expenses, and, in some instances, spending money.

<sup>10</sup> In addition, one full-time education staff worker was sent, by his international union office in Washington, to observe the educational techniques used.

tive bodies. Several students were sent because they had shown some special interest in union activities but needed development. Others were selected so that someone in a position of authority would be equipped to answer comprehensively the local members' questions on some of the national issues. Still others were sent primarily as a reward for past union activity, and some apparently were selected because of their willingness or eagerness to represent their organizations at the school.

Age, office, and union experience of the students reflected the varied bases of selection. Some were very young, others were well on in their working years. One student had been a union member less than a year, while another's first experience with the labor movement dated back 29 years. Roughly half, however, had joined a trade-union for the first time in the postwar years. All but three held some union office, and these three had previously done so. Those in shop steward or grievance committee work were the most numerous, followed by local presidents or vice presidents. Other offices represented ranged from IUC delegate to sergeant at arms, including two on education committees; several held more than one office. Some had previously attended week-end conferences, or schools run by their own internationals.

### Type of Training

Major emphasis is on provoking thought and awareness, as a means of stimulating the individual to be more active in his union and more effective in his office. The student is not expected to absorb a mass of facts in 1 week but is given a great deal of printed information for future study and use on the union job. Neither is he expected to become skilled in teaching others. Each student receives a "kit for union education" and a manual which contains a section on educational work; simple types of educational programs, such as lectures, panel discussions, and movies, are demonstrated by their use in the program. But this aspect of the training is secondary to the development of the delegate himself.

Again the Pennsylvania school is illustrative. To obtain the active student participation necessary for maximum success in such a short period, group discussion was utilized extensively, and it was made clear from the outset that individual

comments and questions were welcome in any session. This was facilitated by the informal atmosphere created by the camp and by the staff's approach.

Two fundamental approaches stood out at the Pennsylvania sessions: (1) raising key issues, presenting factual background material and various approaches, and leaving it to the students to think through their own opinions and solutions; (2) relating these broad issues to individual experience, frequently in bread-and-butter terms (such as the effect on prices of consumer failure to press Congress on economic controls legislation).

These techniques were used particularly in some of the regular morning classes. The material was presented in such a way as to make one central concept stand out: in labor history—struggle, both past and present; in international relations—the fact that preconceived ideas and attitudes, rather than facts, frequently shape individual opinions on foreign policy; in economics—the changing character of the American economy. In the opening labor history session, each student was asked to tell his own experience in the trade-union movement. These accounts showed up many of the broad trends and problems which have characterized and shaped labor history. One student, for example, described how his local had been an AFL affiliate before the CIO was organized, subsequently joined a CIO international, withdrew when that international was ousted from the CIO on charges of Communist domination, and finally joined the international of which it was currently a part. The international relations class started with the students recounting local comment on the UN, Korea, and General MacArthur's recall; conflicting statements quoted pointed up immediately the need for facts on the issues involved, facts which in turn led to related problems. In contrast, the economics class built up more gradually to individual experience. Only in the third session, on current controls, did the students become vocal, citing more than enough wage stabilization problems to demonstrate forcefully the connection between national and local economic problems.

Every effort was made, throughout the course, to avoid getting involved in local issues. Students from the same locality as a particular speaker received some answers to specific questions; e. g., a



speaker from the Philadelphia Fair Employment Practices Commission explained to a Philadelphia delegate how to get legal action on help wanted ads which specify white applicants only. Time was set aside in one of the workshops for a discussion of how to increase attendance at union meetings, after repeated comments indicated the problem was common to most organizations.

The brief time available forced the workshops to rely largely on discussion rather than practice of techniques. In the beginning political action workshop, for example, a detailed description of each step in an election campaign was given, from the working up of mailing lists for registration drives, to ways of assisting members to get to the polls on election day. On the other hand, the parliamentary procedure workshop held two mock meetings, followed by discussion of the correct procedure for handling situations which arose. One such "situation" was deliberately created: several students arranged in advance to "heckle" that day's officers and "railroad" the meeting through to a quick end, through a strategic use of the rules. Though introduced facetiously, this informal "cell" illustrated vividly the skill required to deal with a serious attempt to control a group.

Flexible treatment of a given subject made it possible for the various sessions to be closely inter-related and to reinforce each other. An evening panel discussion of the problem of protecting civil rights in the current period of tension was continued in the next morning's labor history class. Similarly, the evening international affairs panel, consisting of an Indonesian Embassy official, a former CARE representative, and a national CIO staff member, strengthened points brought out in the international affairs class.

The curriculum was also fluid, and readily adjusted to meet the needs of the group and to take maximum advantage of teaching personnel who could not spend the full week at the camp. For example, the final day's workshops were dropped to permit a general discussion on how the students could most effectively report on the school to their organizations.

A variety of "byproducts" of a week's living and talking together supported the more formal training at the school. One was the informal exchange of information on methods. A dinner conversation turned to the use of job descriptions. One student told how management in his plant

had accepted job descriptions during the war, but was now trying to get rid of them as too binding; another explained that the contract provision for job descriptions in his plant was greatly weakened by a clause which stated that the descriptions need not include all kinds of work done in a particular job; others at the table, previously unfamiliar with this subject, came to the conclusion that it would be highly desirable to obtain such provisions. Another incidental gain was increased understanding of the different types of problems facing unions in different industries. Finally, an opportunity was afforded for threshing out misunderstandings between local groups or for explaining the net gains, for the membership generally, of policies which some members maintained benefited one group at the expense of another.

### Gains from Training

The difficulties of gauging the schools' effect stem from the fact that the goals are largely intangible as well as from the differences in student personality and experience. Inconclusive, seemingly confusing discussions at the school, for example, may provoke the student to further thought or investigation on his own initiative.

Some guide to the effect of the training is provided by student reaction during the 1951 Pennsylvania course and their ideas for using the material in their organizations. Two students—one a union member for 9 years, the other quite new to the movement—were eager to start immediately on the time-consuming work of preparing for a campaign to get people to register to vote. One officer, a long-time union member, was determined that other members should hear some of the international affairs material—all new to him. Another hoped that he and the other delegate from his organization could gather some of the members informally in his home for brief evening sessions. The editor of a union newspaper felt that he had received good equipment with which to answer the few, but vocal, remaining leftist members of his organization.

Still others had apparently given little thought to the subject, outside the required report to their organizations, and only a few were definite on the kind of reports they would submit. The discussion of reporting produced a variety of possibilities: a short report to the executive or the membership

might be supplemented by substantive reports to education and other committees, or the students might work with the education committees, plan occasional local meetings on particular subjects discussed, etc.

The directors of the program have from time to time attempted, through written questionnaires or follow-up meetings for particular groups, to determine how effective the training is. A few very specific results are indicated. One officer started a PAC in his local after attending a school. Another bought a movie projector and was showing a good many films in his community. Another has described the school at meetings of several different groups, illustrating her talk with her colored slides. One of the Pennsylvania students started a mimeographed sheet. For other delegates, the school experience facilitated projects already under way.

## Union Training Program of the AFL Paper Making Unions

Two unions in the pulp and paper industry, the Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers and the Paper Makers (both AFL), have conducted an intensive training program for officers, stewards, and grievance committeemen since 1948. This program is distinguished from other union education projects because (1) the training classes are built into the union structure and are made a function of the regional officers of the international unions, and (2) actual teaching in local unions is done by instructors chosen by the locals themselves. These instructors are trained to use methods and materials prepared and issued by the education departments of the two internationals.

Before starting the training program described below, a careful examination was made of what had been done in the field of union education. The authors experimented with other methods and media—including pamphlets, films, film strips, and the other traditional devices of worker education. No evidence was found, in the work of other unions or in our own effort, that these other “media” accomplished anything of value to the union to any significant degree and over any period of time.

The two things that seemed essential for a suc-

One officer used the material at a meeting scheduled for shortly after the school and attended by representatives of her union from all over the State.

Such specific results are, however, scattered and indeed are not expected or even desired by school officials, who point out that many students are not in a position to go back to their unions and institute major projects or changes. The results may be no more specific than those described by one former student who said the training had been useful to her in “all sorts of ways, mostly in my own work—for instance, knowing how to get speakers or set up bulletin boards, or just having more assurance.” Most important of all, in the staff’s opinion, is the creation of a sense of belonging and of being part of a broad and important movement.

Successful program were missing; that is, the integration of the union leadership directly into the program and extensive participation by active members of the union. The program here described has these two features and has made a difference to the two unions to a significant degree and over a period of time.

Teacher-training classes are conducted jointly by the education departments at the request and with the cooperation of the regional officers. Just as these officers have responsibility for negotiations and the top steps in grievances, so also do they assume joint responsibility for the conduct and follow-through on training classes.

The role of the union hierarchy in the program is clarified in the example cited later, and it should be noted that this role is of crucial importance. It is basic to the success of the program and carries with it that all-important quality—acceptability. The line officers, from international vice president down, participate in the program at every step. It is their program as well as that of the education departments.

Use of rank-and-file instructors was originally undertaken for the obvious and universal reason, insufficient budget and staff to do otherwise. But it has important advantages, which were not fully appreciated at first: It is the only method by which these two unions can reach large numbers of mem-

bers not otherwise reachable by educational programs. Rank-and-file instructors in these two unions have reached several thousand officers, stewards, committeemen, and members who would not attend a seminar, or institute, or even a conference. Meeting in union halls, courthouses, public libraries, schools, at whatever hours the class members find convenient, these volunteer teachers are doing what the professionals could not do. Most important, because they have an easy familiarity with local conditions and personalities, they make better instructors than outside teachers. Because many possess great natural teaching skill, they have done on the whole a high-grade instructional job.

Since the same instructors repeat their classes, as well as teach additional subjects year by year, the education program has a continuity in the participating locals that could be achieved in no other way. The unions thus have a body of trained men and women to carry forward this activity at the local level.

The last advantage is inestimable. Building the program directly into the local union structure distinguishes it sharply from union education programs under which a course is taught, and the teachers move on leaving nothing behind. Not only are there people in the local trained to teach, but there is a well-defined course of study which has sufficient vitality and currency, so that new classes can be set up from year to year. Local instructors thus have more active and vital roles than the local union education committees which exist in many places.

Initiative rests with the local instructor, but there is a definite link with the international education departments. They always know where classes are being conducted. The instructor sends a written request to headquarters for material for his class. He orders the material class by class, so that the departments know fairly well the progress of the individual groups. After the eight units of the first course have been taught, the instructor submits his final attendance records. On the basis of these, certificates are prepared for the members of the class who completed six out of eight units.

The selection of local instructors is entirely in the hands of the local union. Sometimes they are appointed by the president, sometimes elected at a local meeting. They include men who already

hold office in the union and men who have no other union activities. The education departments have set up criteria for the choice of instructors, but the departments have neither the power to recommend nor to veto the choices actually made.

The international unions and the locals jointly finance the program. The internationals pay the salaries and expenses of the staff members who prepare the work material and train the instructors. They also pay for the conference rooms and provide most of the training material, both for instructor classes and for the classes in the local unions. The local unions pay for the time lost by instructors during their 4 days of training (plus any travel and other expenses), and they pay for setting up local classes.

### Methods and Materials

Two principal teaching methods are used: Leading the discussion from questionnaires, and "acting" followed by discussion. Both are designed to capitalize on the most effective learning technique, that of "learning by doing." Stewards do not tell how they handle new employees; they show the class by a skit with a newcomer whose background (perhaps antiunion) is known by the class but not by the steward. The same technique is used on actual grievance cases. After the acts, the members of the class discuss how the steward did his job, how they could improve on it, what he left out, and so forth.

Classes are not exhorted to "know the contract" but are given questionnaires which test their skill in applying their contracts to the solution of specific problems of overtime, vacation, and holiday pay, etc.

The least effective method of learning, that is, by hearing alone as in a lecture, is used only as much as is necessary in order to make transitions in subject matter and to let the class know what will be done next.

The methods to be used in teaching a given unit of the course are well defined. Skits are sometimes worked into discussions based on a questionnaire but the units which are given over to "acting" have their case and situations fixed in advance. Subject matter is also well defined, but discussions can and do vary widely in content. The instructor, however, must know an irrelevancy



when he hears one; his job is to raise problems, guide the discussion, and to summarize. So while teaching procedure and the general topic under discussion are fairly well fixed, the manner in which the roles are handled and the content of the discussions may vary within wide limits.

Teaching materials are devised to preclude any serious deviation from these methods. These materials are carefully worked out, unit by unit, and give the instructor cues and discussion aids without placing him in a strait-jacket. Instructors are encouraged to devise their own cases and discussion aids. (A few instructors, not many, have responded.) The cases themselves are written out in detail so as to define carefully the grievance under consideration. The actors cannot alter the acts in a case but may play it any way they see fit. The variety that is attained with the same set of facts is infinite.

### Subject Matter

The initial subject matter in the training program is covered in eight units for each course.

- (1) What is the steward's job? (Questionnaire.)
- (2) Greeting the new employee. ("Acting.")  
Union Accomplishments. (Questionnaire.)
- (3) How the Union is Run (questionnaires):  
Constitution.  
Union finances.  
Majority rule—Minority rights.
- (4) Grievances. (Questionnaire—"acting.")
- (5) The Contract. (Questionnaire.)
- (6) Grievances. (Questionnaire—"acting"—grievance record.)
- (7) Information for the steward (questionnaires):  
Taft-Hartley Act.  
Wagner Act.  
Pension plans and social security.  
Reading list.
- (8) Grievances. ("Acting.")

The subject matter dealt with here is easily within the range of the average local instructor, as exemplified in the two illustrations outlined.

One entire unit or class is devoted to a series of questions concerning the way in which the unions are run. For example, the following sentence appears on one questionnaire, with the query, "True or false?"

"A member can criticize the local president at a local meeting for going in alone to see the personnel manager on a grievance."

Class members answer this question in the light of their individual opinions, and they try to base their choice on one section of their international union constitution.

Another questionnaire in the same unit contains the following statement, to be answered "true or false," with constitutional references:

"The minority has rights which include:

- (1) Unlimited opportunity to present its point of view at the local meeting;
- (2) Preventing a vote on an issue on which there is agreement among the majority."

Again, the class members consider whether or not these statements are true within their international union constitution and discuss the relative merits of the issues involved.

The major part of the subject matter of the course relates to everyday complaints and grievances. These are set up in the form of questionnaires and also in the form of actual cases to be handled through "acting." In one unit, for example, the class considers the plight of a steward who is called into the superintendent's office and asked to name the member of his crew who was responsible for breaking a plant clock during horseplay—a battle with paper stock in the machine room. They watch one of their members respond to the superintendent and later discuss how they would handle the same issue if in the steward's place.

The first eight units listed constitute the "basic training" course for officers, stewards, and committeemen. It covers the ground most familiar to the local instructors at the time when much of their attention must be devoted to the methods and techniques of teaching.

The next four units of subject matter, 9 through 12, deal with the topic of seniority. Units 9 and 10 treat all types of seniority in the paper industry; units 11 and 12 differentiate the types, so that each class deals with the type of system operating in its particular plant.

In the seniority units, a shift of emphasis is required in training. The subject matter can no longer be taken so much for granted as in units 1 through 8. Teaching methods, on the other hand, require less time and emphasis, since the instructors have already taught in their own local classes. The training of instructors for the seniority units emphasizes the acquisition of information and

understanding about the operations and significance of different systems of seniority. Thus far the seniority units have been taught in three regions of the country, with varying success. However, they are still too difficult to be taught in their present form by all of the union instructors. Their application, in units 11 and 12, to individual plants also needs clarification. Further work is being done on the materials.

Seniority was chosen for the second course of four units because of the insistent calls for help when lay-offs hit the industry in 1949. Although this problem has disappeared for the present, the subject is of sufficient current interest and value to be continued as the second course in the program.

The next course will deal with certain economic questions affecting the pulp and paper industry. It will include the relationship of wages, prices, and profits, and other economic issues. It is clear that the preparation of successful material for this part of the program will not be easy.

### The West Coast Program

An all-out training effort made by the two unions in the important Pacific Coast region in the winter and early spring of 1951 best exemplifies the workings of this program.

The instructor-training classes were set up by the vice presidents of the two unions on the Pacific Coast. In consultation with the education directors, these officers determined where and when the training classes would be held. They invited all the local unions on the Coast to send representatives to the training classes, and specified a strict limit on the number from each local union.

Before classes were started, the education departments had complete lists of the members who would attend the classes. On the basis of location of the members, the departments set up exact lists for each training center and informed the local members when and where to appear.

Fourteen separate training classes were held in 10 different cities. Three members of the unions' education staffs did the teaching. There were two sessions of two full days of training, beginning at 9 in the morning and ending at 5:30 in the afternoon. There was neither night work nor planned recreation.

After the first 2 days (covering approximately the first four units of the course) the instructors were sent home with assignments to complete during the 1-month interval between training classes. Each instructor was required to report to his local union and organize his local classes. This included the registration of the members who would attend the classes, fixing the time and place, and preparing a written order form for the material needed for the first class. Each instructor also had to write up two cases (grievances or complaints) from his experience or his plant. (These are the source material from which cases are written into the program.) Finally, the instructors were asked to read one book on the relationship between foreman and steward.

The second 2 days of training were held about 5 weeks after the first in the same locations, except that the 10 centers had been cut down to 8. Units 5 to 8 were covered, in addition to more practice teaching. A great surge of learning had taken place in the interval (as it usually does) and the instructors had much more assurance and were getting the "feel" of their job.

As they turned in their class registration forms and order forms for material, class arrangements were discussed with them. Any special problems that had arisen were taken up then. If the aid of an international representative was needed (for example, to speak at a local meeting and urge fuller participation in the class), such a representative was assigned the job at the time. Before the instructor class was released to teach, the education departments had a good idea where the problems would arise and what they would be.

Also at the second 2-day session, a schedule was arranged for observation of each local class by a member of the education staff. In order to be certified for further teaching, an instructor must attend all 4 days of training, complete the assignments, teach the full course, and give satisfactory evidence that he has grasped the teaching methods. The education staffs do the observing, since the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching material can be noted at the same time as the instructor's ability is gauged. A confidential report on the teaching then goes to the instructor, giving suggestions on teaching procedure. Occasionally international representatives in the area are relied on for observation reports, and in some cases a written report from the instructor himself

is used as a basis for judgment. Less than 10 percent of the total are not encouraged to do further teaching.

The statistics for this region bear out the virility of the program. A total of 143 men and women started the instructor-training classes, including 10 international representatives and officers. Ten men did not complete the 4 days of training, and five dropped out later for various reasons.

Of 110 local teachers, 81 have actually taught the first eight units of the course in local classes; more than 20 instructors have taught two classes, and one instructor has been sent on a special assignment to teach in a new local. The classes have been attended by over 800 local officers, stewards, and members.

To anyone familiar with the field of worker education, these results are impressive. The return, in terms of actual classroom hours, far exceeds even what is accomplished by some of the university extension services, which have larger resources and staffs at their disposal. One well-known university which does labor extension work, for example, was able to report the completion of 24 classes by September 1951. The university has 10 full-time professional people on its staff to arrange labor extension classes.

### **Extent and Evaluation of the Program**

By early 1952 the program had a very broad base. Instructors had been trained on the Pacific Coast and in British Columbia; in Ontario and Quebec, Canada; in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan; in the Southern States; in the New England States; in upper New York State; and in the Middle Atlantic States. The extent of local union participation has varied, but a very large proportion of the locals invited into the program have taken part.

Whenever training classes are set up for instructors in an area, the international representatives are automatically included in the classes. They attend all the instructor-training classes, so that they are qualified to teach, if necessary. However, their role in the program is one of the consultant and adviser, just as in all other local union affairs.

A total of 375 instructors have been trained thus far. The great majority of the local union instructors have actually set up classes in their local unions and have taught. About a fourth of the local instructors have taught more than one set of classes. Approximately 3,000 members (principally officers, committeemen, and stewards) have attended the classes.

The training program in these unions can now be called experimental only in terms of the subject matter being added. The core of the course is firmly established. Enough evidence is at hand to make certain predictions with assurance. For example: (1) Two out of every three instructors trained will actually teach classes in their locals; (2) two-thirds of our locals have the desire and the resources to participate in this program; and (3) of the locals that start, 80 percent will sustain the program by sending their instructor for advanced training and by supporting additional classes in the first units.

The program described is not one of education but of training. Union officials do not take responsibility for making up the deficiencies in the general education of the membership. Trade-unions are instruments with very well-defined purposes and methods, and "education" like "organization" and "agitation" must be related to these purposes and methods. The word "training," as we use it, is not accidental. However, many of the daily problems of the local union representative have objective meaning, and the trade-union tradition itself is lively and provocative. The content and direction of the class discussion are likely, therefore, to be limited only by the attitudes, values, and knowledge of the members in the class.

The most important result of this program is that the local union commits itself to the slow and difficult but rewarding process of self-help. Both of the unions concerned have attained a record of local autonomy and imaginative leadership in American trade-unionism. It is these characteristics which make possible a training program of vitality and significance. In turn, the training program helps articulate the aspirations which gave birth to the unions.



## Education Through White Collar Workshops

The chief purpose of the White Collar Workshops sponsored by the American Labor Education Service is to help make the white-collar worker aware of his position in the labor force and of the economic and social problems which he faces and their possible solutions. Under the direction of Eleanor G. Coit, Director of the American Labor Education Service, White Collar Workshops conducts each year (in addition to several local white-collar conferences) a 2-week resident summer session attended by from 30 to 40 men and women white-collar workers from various sections of the country.

Many of the students who at some time participated in the resident session of the Workshops have become local leaders in their own trade-unions or active in local organizations which stress the importance of community action and plan the dissemination of economic and political information. Former students have participated in establishing the educational work of a number of white-collar unions.

Changing economic problems during two world wars and the ensuing periods, as well as the increasing mechanization of industry, resulted in an ever-rising percentage of white-collar workers in the labor force. White-collar workers, although they are frequently characterized as semiskilled, include an increasingly large number of high-school and college graduates. This group consciously separates itself from the organized labor movement because of psychological and educational factors. Its members are generally in the lower-income brackets, and, by and large, are relatively inarticulate economically and politically.

An occasional evaluation of the strong and weak features of the summer school is obtained by sending out questionnaires to former students. Answers to the 1950 questionnaire indicated almost unanimous agreement that the best thing about the school was the informal and easy manner in which the classes were conducted, the team work of the instructors, and the "bull sessions" that lasted long after classes. Men and women, who later became active in union educational programs for white-collar workers, were quick to subscribe to the value of "bull sessions." The

exchange of attitudes and points of view between students coming from all over the United States and even from foreign countries was a most stimulating experience to many students. It is astonishing how much can be accomplished within the short period of 2 weeks.

From its beginning, of course, the school has included students of all creeds and colors. Workers from different sections of the country learned to study, play, and live together for a period of 2 weeks in the summer. A continuing attempt has been made to discuss as frankly as possible the origin of prejudices. Undoubtedly a more positive change of attitude on this subject has arisen from the fact that the students lived together, studied together, and discussed their problems together long after classroom hours.

### History of the Program

The first school, held on the campus of Oberlin College in Ohio, was attended by 33 women from 15 cities. Of these women, only three belonged to a trade-union. In spite of the depression, suspicion existed on the part of many of the students that unemployment could be attributed to the individual, and that it was a mark of his personal inadequacy. Therefore, the school provided an experience in working with students who were prejudiced against collective economic action and who felt a rather strong opposition to union organization.

Each summer the membership of the Summer School for Office Workers (the original title of the White Collar Workshops) changed as the student body reflected the growth of the union movement. When the National Labor Relations (Wagner) Act gave encouragement to unionism, more white-collar workers joined unions and the conflict between the middle-class aspirations of white-collar workers and the school's purpose of awakening a trade-union consciousness was lessened. The scope of the Workshop program gradually widened to cover white-collar groups other than office workers, such as teachers, social workers, telephone workers, and others. As the Congress of Industrial Organizations unions emerged, the school strove to maintain a balance of workers from the American Federation of Labor and CIO unions in its student body. It was also opened to men, and is interested in having an equal number of men and women students.

In addition to students from AFL and CIO white-collar unions, the school has included in recent years white-collar workers organized in separate locals within industrial unions. Industrial unions believe that white-collar workers of the automobile, steel, and rubber industries are workers, like their own production workers, and should be a part of the industrial unions. The white-collar workers, partly because of their educational training and partly because of the general social climate, have not always accepted the thesis that their interests are similar to those of the worker on the belt line or in the production plant. Frequently, these white-collar workers are inactive, dues-paying members, who take little part in union activities. Such students constitute a real challenge to the school's educational program.

### The Student Body

Effective workers' education implies a continuous interest and curiosity on the part of students in community problems. One of the standards which the recruiting committee of White Collar Workshops applies is that the student be consciously interested in his own economic and social problems, and that he be willing to assume some leadership responsibility in his own local community, whether in a club, union, or political organization. In effect, therefore, the staff has had the problem of recruiting students who would be willing to use the information which they acquired at the summer session.

Students are recommended by the organization to which they belong or by a local recruiting committee; all applications are passed upon by a National Admissions Committee, which attempts to see that the student body each year has a good balance in regard to geographic regions, organizations, and types of jobs represented.

The budget is meager, and the support of the program depends upon a number of groups. The students are financed through scholarships raised partly by the volunteer committees, partly by the organizations from which the students come, and partly by the national office of the school. White-collar unions send students either on partial or full scholarships. Recently, White Collar Workshops has had among its students a number from various foreign countries who have come to

study the American labor movement and particularly its educational work. Some of these visitors were non-Caucasians. Their contribution to the richness of the curriculum has been invaluable.

### The Workshop Program

White Collar Workshops has adopted a fundamental curriculum which stresses the interrelationship of economics, psychology, and sociology. The fact that so many white-collar students are politically apathetic and live in a world of "dreams" is evident in the discussions. Lack of realism seems to be much more characteristic of the white-collar workers than of industrial workers. The latter have accepted themselves as a part of the labor force and have long since abandoned the hope of becoming entrepreneurs.

Probably one of the most interesting discussions in the Workshops sessions is that which has to do with probing the peculiar psychology of the white-collar workers—the snobbishness and the tendency to look down upon the dirty overalls of the production worker. It seems to be a mark of progress for factory workers to be able to say that their children have received an "education" and are performing white-collar jobs. One of the characteristics of this class distinction, brought out in these sessions, is that it is not reflected in wages and salaries. It is fundamentally "psychic" in its reward.

In addition to the morning discussions attended by the whole student body, an important part of the school program has come to be the afternoon "how-to-do" workshops. At these sessions, small groups of white-collar union members work together, under experienced leaders, in developing skills for carrying on union activities more effectively. Workshops are held, for example, in grievance procedure, public relations, legislation, and union education.

Teaching techniques found effective in workers' education among industrial workers were adapted to the white-collar group. Essentially the philosophy behind these techniques is based upon the need for intelligent and democratic participation in the economic, political, and social life; the method used has emphasized informal group discussions, based on the actual experience of the adult worker-student and oriented toward the



problems they face in their unions and in their communities.

The faculty has experimented with material and with methods of teaching which would induce the participants of the Workshops to talk freely about themselves, their gripes, their work situations, and their aspirations. To obtain a faculty which is familiar with this sort of approach is by no means easy. The most effective instructors are those men and women who are oriented to the labor movement, who have had training in human relations or social psychology, who recognize the value of the discussion method, and who are essentially democratic. They must be able to forego "prima donna" methods and accept the group discussion process.

### Operating Problems

The problem of securing a school site, which is located where people are sympathetic to the labor movement, which is sufficiently inexpensive to permit workers to spend their 2-week vacation, and which, at the same time, provides facilities for study and recreation, has been very difficult. There must be access to a library and to a community which makes possible close contact with the labor movement. Sometimes, in spite of careful planning, local custom is a challenge to the school's principles. For example, the Workshop

was once held in a suburban community having a large beach frontage on a lake, but the existing color prejudice made it difficult for the school to function according to its democratic philosophy. In this instance, the students voluntarily refused to use the beach until it was established that they could do so without discrimination.

The problem, too, of securing the cooperation of national and local unions to provide scholarships or special help for special students is real. Workers' education in the United States has had a long history in unions of industrial workers, but it is a more difficult matter with white-collar unions. White-collar workers are white-collar workers because they have had "an education." Consequently it is difficult for some white-collar union leaders and leaders of other white-collar organizations to sense the need of workers' education and to understand that the classroom education of the ordinary secondary school, or even college, is not always pertinent to the special problems which the white-collar workers must face on the job. On the other hand, various white-collar unions cooperate with the Workshops and in some cases have called upon the American Labor Education Service to cooperate in developing their own educational programs.

White Collar Workshops is looking forward to its twentieth session, to be held at Pendle Hill, outside Philadelphia, from July 27 to August 11, 1952.

## IAM Training for Active Participation in Local Lodges

Aims of the AFL International Association of Machinists' training program are to inspire local lodge officials to become more effective in the performance of their duties and the rank and file to be more active in the lodge, and to stimulate permanent educational programs on the local level. To achieve these objectives, the Education Department of the IAM conducts brief institutes for union members anywhere in the United States and Canada on request of local lodges. Training sessions are usually held in the evenings, attendance of both elected officials and members is stressed, and the subject

matter is selected and presented so as to emphasize the functions and responsibilities of the local lodges and to find answers to their problems. Lectures and group discussions coupled with visual instruction are the teaching methods.

The IAM provides training for the general membership—the "backbone" of the organization—which is relatively novel in the field of worker education. This type of training presented problems in basic procedure which to some degree were successfully surmounted, after conducting experimental institutes. Practical consideration of the problems affecting the individual lodges as well as the flexible treatment in planning each program and in instruction methods help to make the program effective. Currently, efforts are being centered on satisfying local lodge

requests for training programs; the ultimate goal is to give all members regardless of location, the opportunity to attend an institute. Although as yet no emphasis has been placed on formally testing results of the training, some local officials have informed the department of changes in lodge administration following the institute.

Methods used by IAM Educational Director Tom Tippet and Assistant Educational Director Dorothy Dowell at an institute held in Waukegan, Ill., in January 1952, were observed by the writer and, at many points in this article, illustrate both the procedures and content of the program as a whole.

### Development and Scope

The Education Department was authorized at the New York City Convention in 1945. Formal steps toward inaugurating the educational training activities by the IAM Education Department were outlined at the organization's Grand Rapids Convention in 1948. Here both the need for training and the establishment of necessary machinery to speed up the process of learning through experience were cited. As stated by the director, in the *Machinist Monthly Journal* of August 1948, the objectives of such training are "to promote a systematic educational and training activity for officers and members of the IAM which would have for its purpose strengthening the union as a labor organization and making it a more effective instrument for protecting and advancing the collective interests of its members and the cause of organized labor in general."

Prior to conducting training institutes for members at the local lodge level, the Education Department in early 1949 initiated a series of 20 institutes<sup>11</sup> for staff members of the organization. Each such institute lasted 4 days and consisted of 8 hours of formal discussion each day. Instruction emphasized, in addition to the history of the labor movement, the administrative techniques employed by the IAM in organizing, in negotiating a contract, and in enforcing an agreement. Staff members were required to attend these institutes. They represented a nucleus of responsible trade-unionists having long experience in

the labor movement, and during discussions at the training sessions their varying viewpoints became clear. Primarily, these officer institutes served to furnish an opportunity for an exchange of ideas and to demonstrate methods of communicating such information to others in the organization. They also acquainted certain staff personnel with the advantages of training programs, particularly District Lodge officials who were destined to initiate, program, and promote similar sessions for the members of the several lodges within their jurisdiction.

In line with the convention resolutions, the Education Department in November 1950 made plans to conduct training institutes for officers and members at the local lodge level in which the major emphasis would be membership understanding of, and participation in, local lodge functions and activities. Thus, it embarked on an endeavor relatively new in the field of workers' education.

Unlike many other trade-union training programs, such as summer schools or full-time training courses, the IAM members attend training sessions after the regular 8-hour workday. Such a program entailed obvious difficulties regarding methodology and consequently the department conducted two series of institutes<sup>12</sup> in different sections of the country on a "trial-run" basis. They consisted of five evening weekday sessions from 7:30 to 10:00 and one all-day session on Saturday from 9:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Subject matter was selected in order to facilitate definition and discussion of the various elected positions in carrying out local lodge functions and understanding of labor history with special emphasis on the IAM.

In 1951, exclusive of the trial runs, the department conducted 13 institutes in which more than 2,000 different IAM members participated. They were held principally in the Midwest and on the West Coast.

### Planning the Institute

In setting up an institute, every effort is made to encourage a large membership attendance and to plan the program in accordance with the prevailing problems in the area. Under current pro-

<sup>11</sup> These institutes were conducted over a 6-month period in 17 principal cities in the United States and in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver, Canada.

<sup>12</sup> The first series was held in the Northwest: Denver, Colo., Salt Lake City, Utah, and Portland, Oreg.; the second in the Northeast: Hartford, Conn., Elmira, N. Y., and York, Pa.



cedure, the Education Department acts as a "servicing agency" of the IAM and supplies training to the district or local lodge upon request. The department discovered as a result of the trial-runs that institutes cannot be arbitrarily assigned to a particular area, planned as to subject matter without knowledge of local needs, or scheduled properly without taking into account other local lodge activities. For these reasons, after receiving a request for a training program in a particular area, the department sends one of its directors to the community to consult and plan with a special institute planning committee of local officials and interested members.

At the pre-institute conference a wide variety of subjects, calculated to create effective administration in the local lodge's everyday activities, is made available for analysis. Local officials acquainted with the obstacles to sound administration of their lodge have the opportunity of choosing subject matter that is designed to disclose local problems and can be used to improve the situation.

All promotional work for the recruitment of institute students is undertaken by local officials. They are guided only by the advice given at the planning conference. Promotional techniques utilized at well-attended institutes in 1951 are emphasized by the director and suggested as possible methods for obtaining large attendance. The Education Department has also limited the area to be covered by any institute; the experimental institutes proved that covering lodges within a 30 to 40 mile area placed a burden on individual members.

Planning officials are given the opportunity of programming a single institute to include day as well as evening sessions for the benefit of night-shift workers. This type of local activity has been undertaken a few times, but in most cases the members employed at night are insufficient in number to warrant daytime sessions. Moreover, both the rank-and-file and the officers expressed a dislike for daytime training, and, in practice, the daytime sessions did not fare well with respect to attendance. The trial-run all-day Saturday sessions were eliminated for the same reasons.

Local officials have a considerable amount of freedom in planning their institutes in order to make them meet the needs peculiar to their specific area. This freedom does not extend to deciding the length of the program because, for the most

part, officials tend to request a long program with a wide variety of topics. The Education Department makes every effort to keep the number of sessions between 4 and 7, depending upon the enthusiasm displayed at the conference, the size of the membership, and the problems prevalent in the area.

Generally, institutes are held at the local union hall where the men feel at home and the atmosphere has proven conducive to discussion. In Waukegan, where the program was planned without an advance conference,<sup>13</sup> the union hall was not used. There, local officials in promoting the program approached every member in the district lodge through the shop steward in his plant. Since approximately 250 members returned application cards signifying that they would attend, the location was changed from the union hall to a local high-school auditorium which could seat more than 350 people. When the average nightly attendance totaled only some 55, the members were somewhat lost in the auditorium. During intermission, the members left the building to smoke and this caused many to straggle in late for the second hour. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, it is the directors' opinion that by allowing local officials to have complete sponsorship of the training activity they will become fully acquainted with the fundamental procedures in organizing an education program. Such realistic local sponsorship will in the long run increase the possibility of continuing similar programs on the local lodge level.

### **The Waukegan Institute**

Basically, both the institute subject matter and the method of presentation are geared to meet two objectives: (1) to stimulate the elected local officials to become better administrators and the rank and file to display more interest and activity in the lodge; and (2) to encourage them to set up a continuing educational program in order to meet new administrative problems and to serve as an important means by which many IAM members can become active trade-unionists. The Education Department does not expect to make skilled union functionaries out of local lodge officials

<sup>13</sup> Because there was sufficient time, this institute was planned by mail. It was the first, following the trial-runs, to be planned in that manner.



during the few hours of educational training supplied by a single institute. It merely strives to provide by this means the incentive or stimulus to learn, and it offers literature and other aids to facilitate the process.

The institute conducted in Waukegan was typical and exemplifies the basic aspects and results of training. Subject matter chosen for the five evening sessions of 2 hours each included labor history with special emphasis on the IAM; functions of the local lodge and responsibility of the local lodge to its members; shop stewards and committeemen; negotiating and organizing; and planning an education program on the local lodge level.

The two directors of the Education Department shared the instruction at three of the five sessions. A direct lecture method explaining functions was used by the director who reserved a portion of the allotted time for questions and discussion. The assistant director<sup>14</sup> used the same approach but stimulated discussion through questions and answers from the lodge participants during the course of lectures. Both techniques brought to the surface many of the problems affecting the locals. Various officials were concerned because of their inability to obtain larger attendances at local lodge meetings and accepted the problem as one that could not be solved. "We've tried everything in the book and still can't get them to come," one official insisted. The discussion that followed however, revealed that "everything" did not include sharpening-up the meeting itself, wider use of committees, and other techniques of democratic participation. Other issues that arose were handled in the same manner.

Presentation by the Education Department officials was necessarily flexible to permit sufficient discussion and explanation on questions of local importance. In some cases, it was necessary to summarize but in every instance the topic on the agenda was at least touched upon. The overall program itself was also flexible and readily adjustable. As originally scheduled, the organizing and negotiating sessions were to be held separately, but they were combined so that the closing night could be devoted to the subject of planning an education program on the local lodge level.

<sup>14</sup> Since the program's inception, the director has had two assistants, the present one having joined the staff in the spring of 1951.

A sound film and narrated filmstrip, each of which was presented in relation to a specific subject, supplemented the lectures and discussions. During the second hour of the opening labor history session, the film, "With These Hands," portrayed the history of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. It realistically showed the members the struggles of organization and the benefits that grew out of united action. Also, during the session pertaining to the function of the local lodge, the IAM filmstrip, "Cradle of Action," depicted the right and wrong way of conducting a local lodge meeting.

The closing session on planning a local lodge education program was strictly a lecture informative period. This was necessary in order to cover a broad field in a short time. Major emphasis was placed on using the facilities available within the lodge and the community in planning training programs, without expending large sums of money. The local lodge meeting was particularly stressed as a permanent source of education, together with the publication of a mimeographed local newspaper, the organization of classes on specific subjects, and presentations on specialized subjects by experts. Also at this session, a professor from the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations at the State university informed the members of the services available for education for organized labor.

Attendance at the last session totaled 39 members, 24 of whom were elected officers of the district lodge and local lodges. This large representation of officers was anticipated in view of the subject matter; this, in fact, was preferred because it brought together the officials who were interested in furthering education and who, more than likely, would be active in instituting training programs. The importance of this session is clear owing to the fact that an estimated 5 to 7 percent of all IAM members will eventually become exposed to institute training, leaving with them the great responsibility of unifying thousands of members in the purpose and functions of active trade-unionism.

Since the institutes were conducted during the evening and the material presented did not appeal to all members, the attendance varied throughout the course. It ranged from 67 at the third session to 39 at the close of the institute. In all, 123 persons from a combined district lodge member-

ship of 2,100, participated in one or more of the sessions and 15 attended the complete institute. The majority of members attending were young men with 5 to 10 years' experience in the labor movement. Women, who make up an estimated third of the combined district membership, participated but averaged only 7 at each session.

As in many previous institutes, the program in Waukegan was attended by people outside the IAM organization who became aware of the sessions through local commercial press publicity. Specifically, five local high-school teachers, all members of the American Federation of Teachers (AFL), were present and three members of two other labor organizations. The Education Department takes no part in granting permission for outsiders to observe but follows its initial policy of leaving such matters up to the local officials who program the institute.

### Effects of IAM Institutes

The conduct of training institutes in many parts of the country, under different local conditions, and for IAM members of varying individual development and experience in the labor movement, has affected the over-all program, and to some extent, although it is difficult to measure, the officials and members of the local lodges. The Education Department does not attempt through questionnaires or other means to discover any improvement in membership performance or whether or not education programs have been started as a result of the institutes. It relies on the institutes and is confident that they will provide the stimulus for such action.

However, the reaction of members who attended the Waukegan institute gives some indication of

the possible future local application of the training. For example, a group of shop stewards at the session devoted to their functions in the local lodge discovered many advantages in holding shop-steward meetings within the district lodge and formulated plans to conduct such meetings in the future. Two of the local high-school teachers expressed a willingness to assist in instructing, if formal classroom programs were initiated. And in closing the institute, the official in charge formally announced that education committees would be established to carry out the intent of the institute.

With each institute held, the directors become more convinced that the program must be broadened to meet demands for training on technical subjects such as wage stabilization and job evaluation. This may be accomplished by additions to the Education Department or by expanding the existing IAM staff training on these subjects.

As a result of knowledge obtained by conducting institutes in many representative sections of the country, the Education Department plans to put to practical use the experience gained. Manuals are currently being prepared for distribution within the IAM to describe the proper methods of performing various local lodge operations. A Handbook for Organizers was written following the officer institutes.

In general, the department expects to continue with the same type of training activity until the needs of all the area requests within the IAM jurisdiction have been fulfilled. They will, of course, be guided by practicality and flexibility—the two essentials of the program which contribute toward creating the ultimate in effectiveness.

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